Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities

Baseline Report 2004-05

NOVA SCOTIA

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Ministers' Message

A significant portion of the population in Nova Scotia live with a disability. Our society is enriched by the unique array of perspectives, skills and talents people with disabilities contribute. This is complemented by a strong representation of stakeholder groups and partnerships that have been forged with provincial and federal governments. This broad perspective provides opportunities for collaboration for the full inclusion of people with disabilities.

The Nova Scotia government has recognized the importance of providing labour market programs and services to people with disabilities, and has supported the disability community for many years. Within the Government of Nova Scotia, the Departments of Community Services, Education and Health work together by combining departmental resources and knowledge to develop and deliver these programs and services. Progress is being achieved through programs like career counseling, campus-based supports, addiction treatments and mental health services.

While these and other initiatives have made a difference in the lives of people with disabilities, we believe that more can be done. The Nova Scotia government, in the coming years, will evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness of our programs and look to identify new initiatives that support our citizens. We will continue to seek the aid of the disability community and other government partners to assist in the development of a support system which meets the needs of the community. Working together, the lives of people with disabilities will be improved and, in turn, Nova Scotia will reap the benefits of the many skills and talents they have to offer.

David Morse
Minister of Community Services

Jamie Muir
Minister of Education

Angus MacIsaac
Minister of Health

Introduction

The Province of Nova Scotia is pleased to present the *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities Report 2004-05.*

This report outlines program objectives, descriptions, target populations and planned cost-shared expenditures for the Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities for the 2004-05 fiscal period. Societal data on educational attainment, labour force activity and employment income is also provided.

Background

In November 2002, Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services approved a *Multilateral Framework on Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities* to guide the negotiation of a successor agreement to the *Employability Assistance for People with Disabilities (EAPD)* agreement.

The new Multilateral Framework for Labour Market Agreements for Persons with Disabilities was approved on December 5, 2003 and became effective on April 1, 2004.

The goal of the new agreement is to improve the employment situation for people with disabilities in Nova Scotia. This goal is reached through three objectives:

- enhancing the employability of persons with disabilities;
- increasing the employment opportunities available to them; and
- building on the existing knowledge base.

Funding under the new agreement is cost-matched by the Government of Canada and the Province of Nova Scotia. In 2004, the federal budget included a $30 million increase in national funding. Nova Scotia received $845,128, which was directed toward supporting current programs and services. In total, the federal government's contribution to Nova Scotia is approximately $8.3 million for 2004-05. The provincial contribution is expected to exceed this amount.

The Province of Nova Scotia offers a wide range of programs and services to support people with disabilities. These programs and services are delivered by three provincial departments: Department of Community Services, Department of Education and Department of Health. This report provides descriptions of the programs and services offered during the 2004-05 fiscal period, as well as statistical data and planned expenditures.

Programs and Services

Department of Community Services

Operating under the *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities,* the primary objective of the department's programs is to assist individuals with disabilities so that they can become gainfully employed. A wide range of programs and services are targeted toward individuals sixteen years of age or older with a disability or disabilities that may create a barrier to employment.

The department offers **employment-related assessment, career counseling and training.** Counselors collect information and assess applicants' skills and needs to determine program eligibility and develop realistic, achievable employability plans. Counselors also make appropriate referrals to relevant education and training programs, including on-the-job training.

The department also provides extensive **disability-related supports.** This includes hearing aids, vision aids and technical aids such as computer software, ergonomics and TTYs. Wage subsidies, job coaches and certain tools of the trade that allow a client to engage in employment or employment related activities may also be provided.

The department's **vehicle conversion** program assists with certain transportation needs for clients who are employed or studying. This includes – but is not limited to – installing hand controls (partial or total conversion) in a client's vehicle. A client must not have access to public transportation and their vehicle must be in good working condition.

Disability supports are provided to employed applicants in a time of **vocational crisis** to enable them to retain their employment. Supports under this service may include hearing aids, vision aids and technology upgrades.

The department also provides **entrepreneurial support** to individuals interested in self-employment. This may include assistance with the development of a business plan or start-up costs.

Department of Education

The Department of Education, through the *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities*, provides a wide range of programs, goods and services to support students with disabilities in post-secondary education. The objective of these programs is to reduce or remove educational-related barriers a student with a disability or disabilities may experience in post-secondary training environments.

The department offers a **tuition grant program** that provides financial assistance in the form of a non-repayable taxable-grant to eligible post-secondary students with a permanent disability.

Other programs and services are offered by the department to ensure students attending post-secondary institutions are also eligible for **campus-based support.** Disability Resource Facilitators and American Sign Language Interpreters provide direct on- campus services that reduce or remove identified barriers for people with disabilities.

There are a number of **other programs and services** offered by the department to ensure students have an equal opportunity for participation and academic achievement in post-secondary environments. These include – but are not limited to – recruitment, training and monitoring of tutors and note-takers; provision of ergonomic equipment and assistive technology; arrangements for tests or exams, including additional time, quiet rooms, assistive technology or segmented testing; and support through adult daily-living needs attendants.

The department has a *Memorandum of Understanding* with all post-secondary institutions in the province and provides funding for the provision of goods and services to students with disabilities. The Rehabilitation Programs and Services division of the department works closely with these institutions and manages an **intake system** which identifies any barriers and the most appropriate goods and services to help the student succeed. The system is based on a collaborative approach involving the student, disability service provider and instructors.

The Department of Education partners with the Nova Scotia Community College in the delivery of two unique programs responding to the educational needs of the disabled community. Students who, while in highschool, were supported in their academic efforts through an Individualized Program Plan (an individualized program of study for students for whom the provincial curriculum outcomes are not applicable/and or attainable) can be accepted into a Nova Scotia Community College skills training program through the Special Admissions Process. The Special Admissions Process recognizes that these students have exceptional needs that might require modification of the skills training curriculum. Students who complete their skills training through the Special Admissions Process program can graduate with either a full Diploma if there has been no curriculum modification or a Certificate of Accomplishment where modification has been necessary.

In addition, the **Deaf Adult Learning Program** – the only one of its kind in Atlantic Canada – provides academic upgrading instruction in American Sign Language that respects the first language and culture of the hearing-impaired community. Students move through different levels of study to obtain a Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults.

Department of Health

The Department of Health provides programs and services to people with disabilities within the mandate of the *Canada-Nova Scotia Labour Market Agreement for Persons with Disabilities* through Addiction Services and Mental Health.

Addiction Services

Addiction Services offers a wide range of programs and services in education, prevention, treatment and rehabilitation for individuals, families and communities affected by substance-use problems. The primary objective is to address the individual employability needs of addicted individuals to lessen the impact of the disability on employability and to further address vocational crisis. The target population is comprised of individuals sixteen years of age or older who are harmfully involved with alcohol and other drugs.

A range of **treatment and rehabilitation** options are delivered by service providers under the District Health Authorities throughout the province. Options are based on a client's needs, short- and long-term goals and ongoing assessment. Programs and services are available on a residential, day or outpatient basis for individuals, groups or families.

Structured treatment occurs in a group setting and helps clients develop a realistic plan for overcoming employment or vocational barriers. Outpatient Services are delivered on a group or individual basis. Other services, such as **Withdrawal Management, and Addiction Education Program**, provide support to clients to reinforce long-term recovery and address employability. They are provided on an in-patient and day-patient basis.

Workplace outreach provides information, education and training to employers. It addresses the issues associated with substance-use problems and the disabling impact of addiction on employees, employability and the workplace. The goal is to reduce barriers for people preparing for, attaining and retaining employment.

Mental Health Services

The employability objectives of Mental Health Services are to provide programs and services for working age adults with mental disabilities who have the potential for employment and for consumers of mental health programs who have the potential for employability.

Clubhouse Programs are located throughout the province and provide on-site skill development. Clients can participate in "work-ordered days", vocational training through supported, transitional or independent employment, and job readiness through resume writing, job search, interviewing, crisis vocational counseling and communication skills.

Employment Skill Development & Support Programs assist in the development of vocational skills to help people with disabilities become employed or start a business. This program also helps participants gain confidence in their ability to seek and attain satisfactory employment.

In addition to addiction and mental health services, the department also provides financial coverage for **prosthetic devices** to help address barriers to employability.

Planned Expenditures

Planned Expenditures 2004-05				
	Community Services	**Education**	**Health***	**Total Contribution**
Provincial contribution	$1,369,897	$2,734,709	$10,254,830	**$15,948,174**
Federal contribution	$1,369,897	$2,734,709	$ 4,185,591	**$8,290,197**
Total contribution	**$2,739,794**	**$5,469,418**	**$14,440,421**	**$24,238,371**

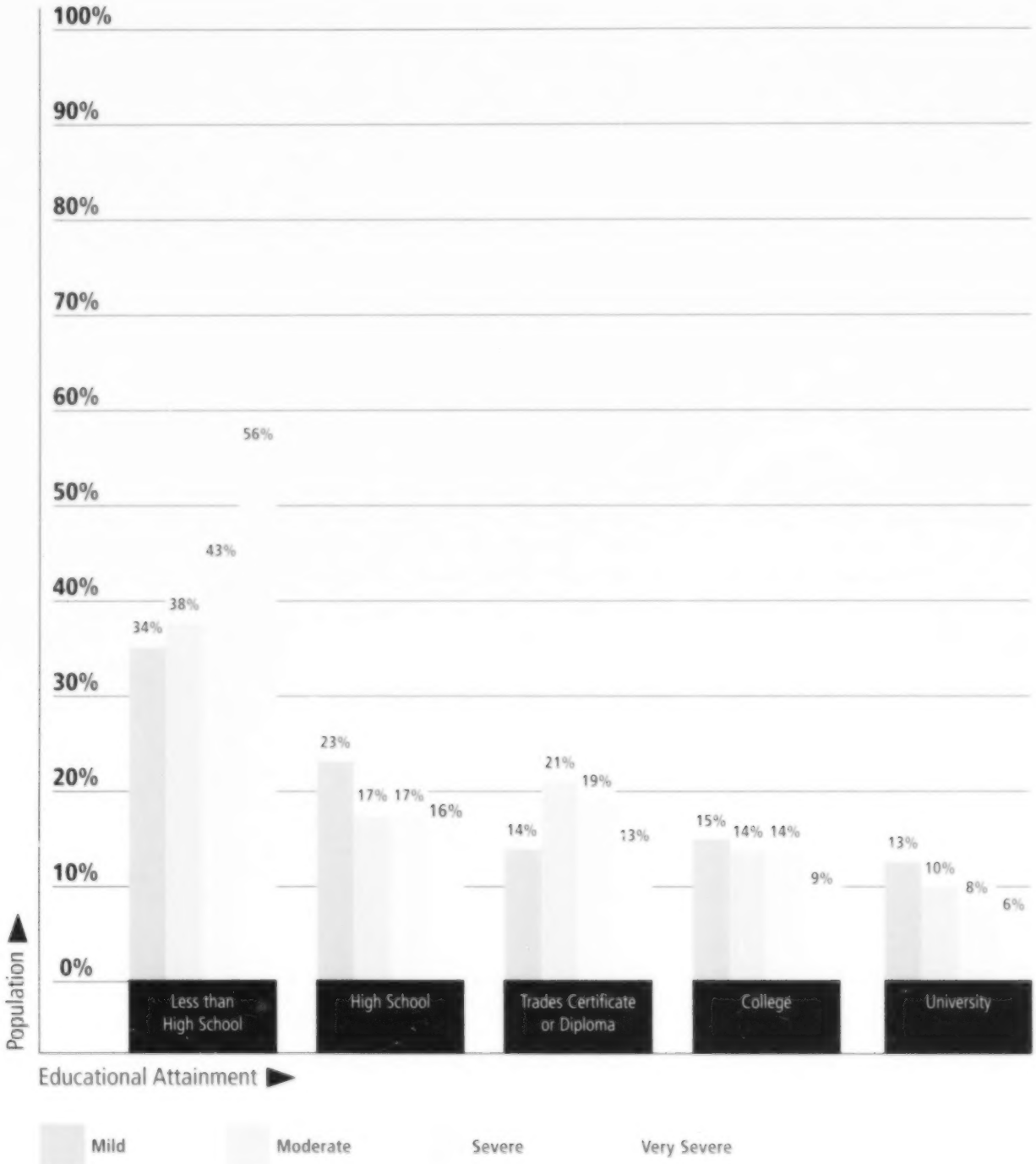
* The Department of Health includes additional expenditures beyond the cost-shared amount Planned Cost-shared Expenditures 2004-05

Societal Indicators

The following charts represent societal indicators of labour market participation for Nova Scotians. These indicators include educational attainment, labour force activity and employment income. The source for the data is the *Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) 2001*[1].

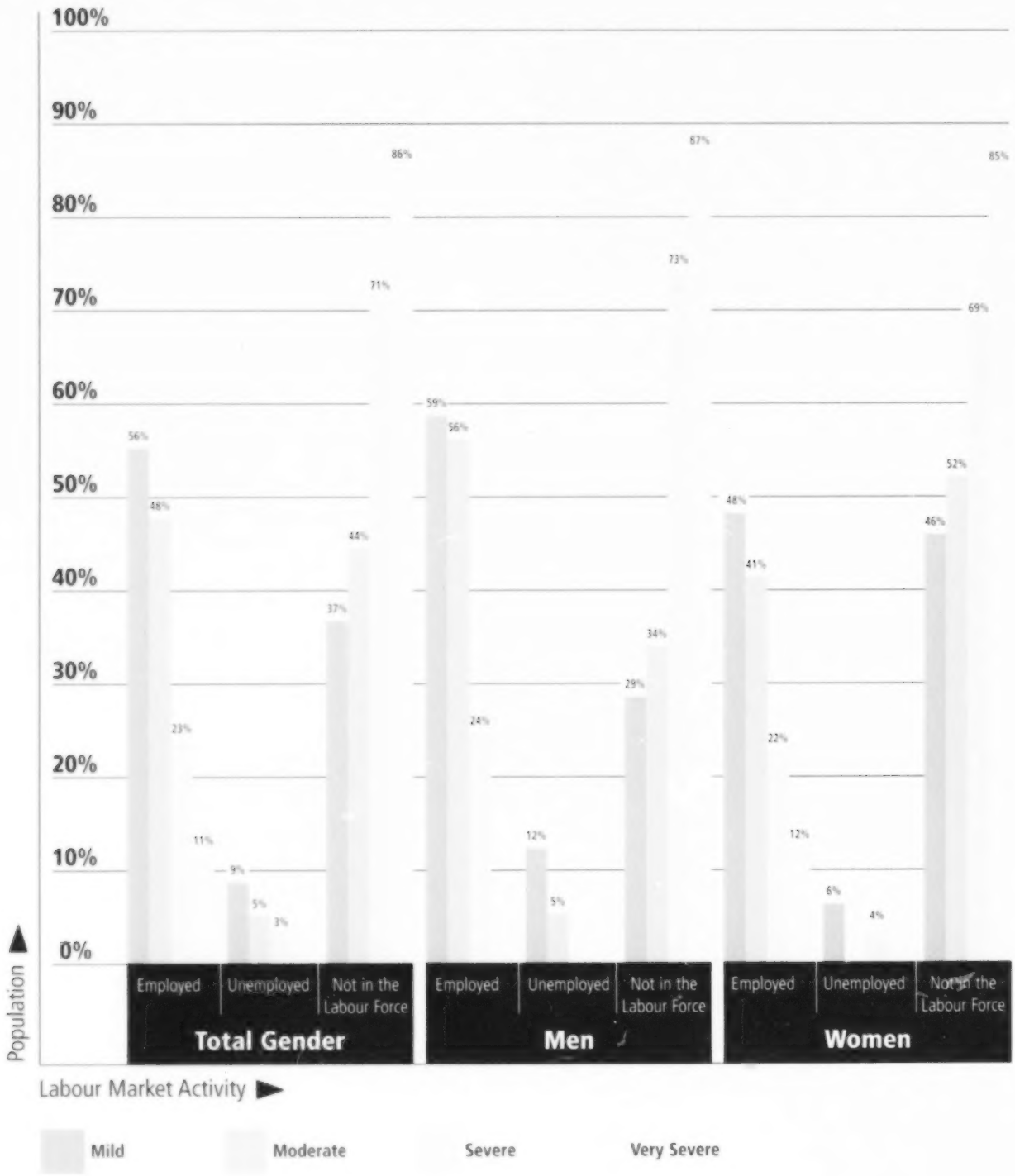
[1] Catalogue no. 89-577-XIE **A Profile of Disability in Canada, 2001**
Participation and Activity Limitation Survey (PALS) 2001 - Statistics Canada

Nova Scotia, Educational Attainment by Severity of Disability for Adults Age 15 to 64



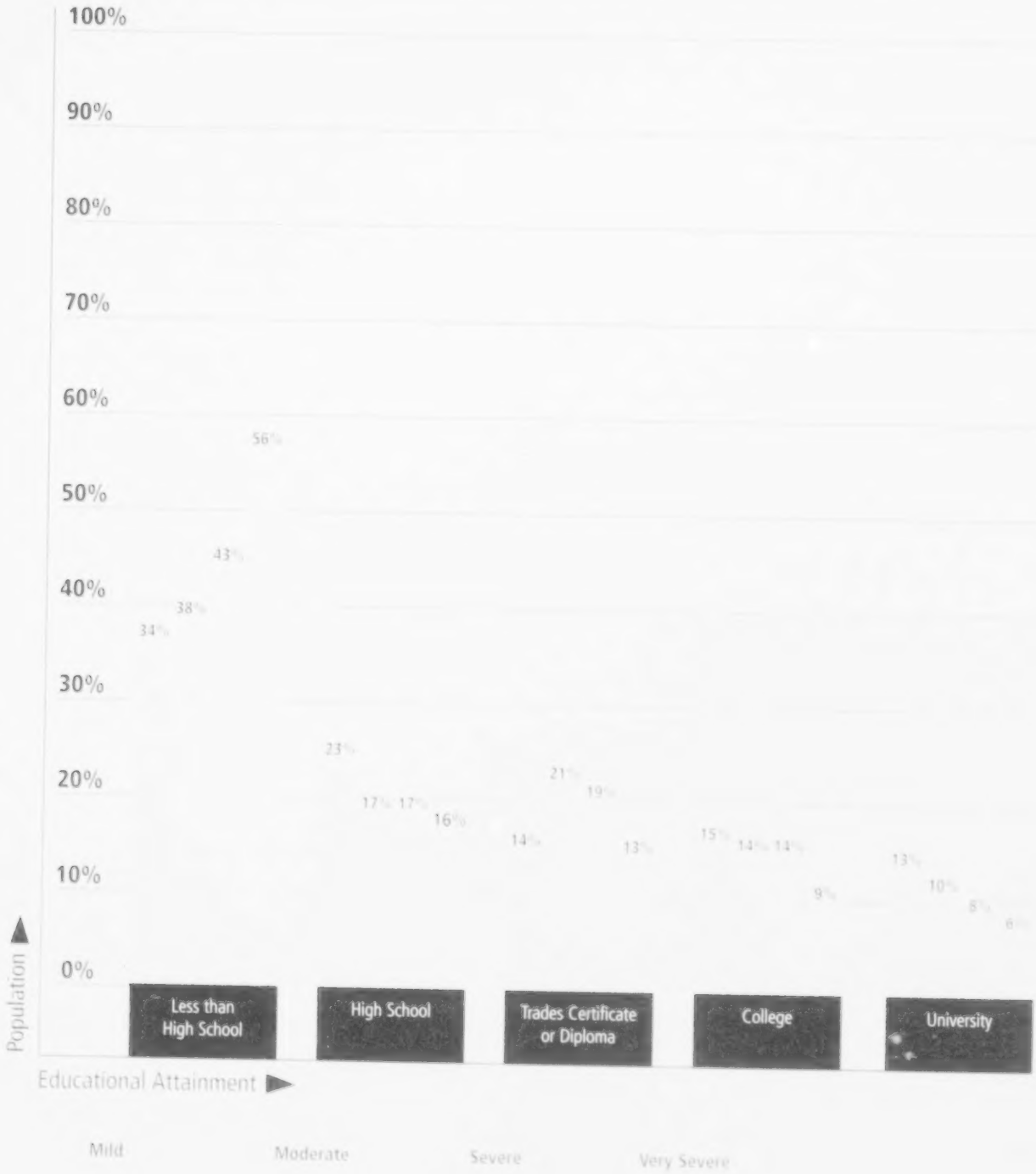
Source: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2001

Nova Scotia, Labour Force Activity for Adults Ages 15 to 64 by Gender and Severity of Disability

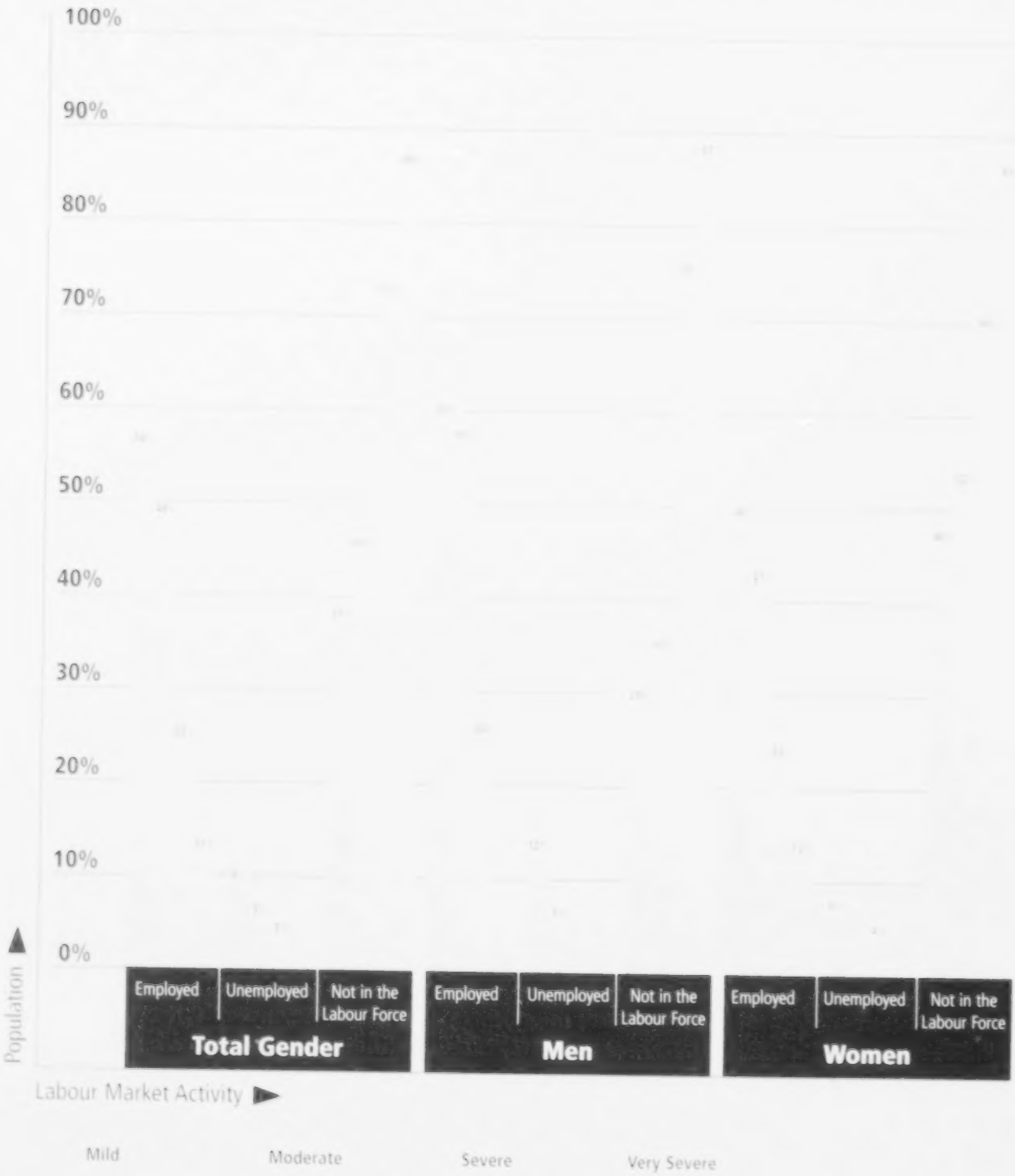


Note: A missing bar indicates that there were too few people in the sample to provide an estimate. Excludes full-time students
Source: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2001

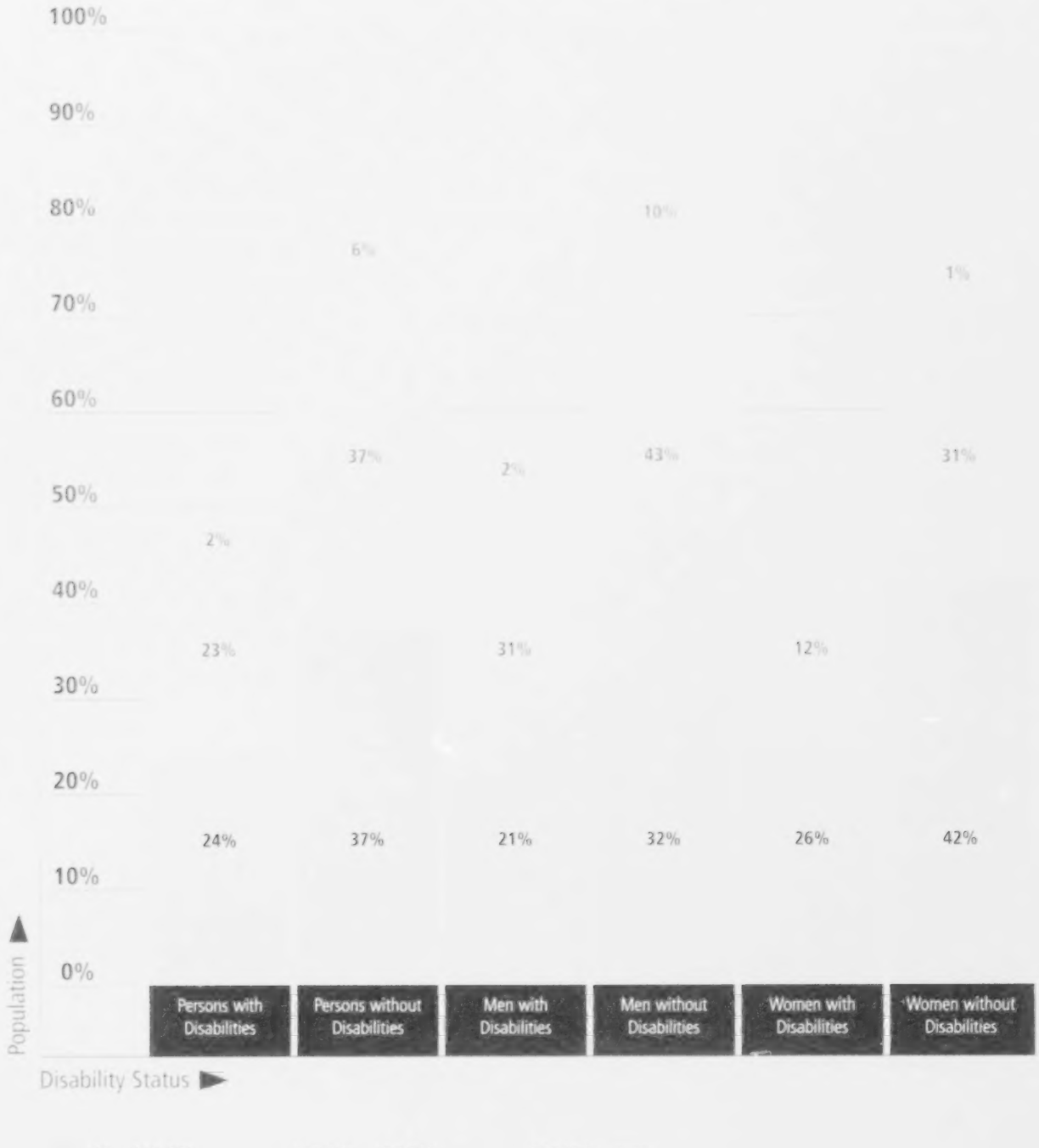
Nova Scotia, Educational Attainment by Severity of Disability for Adults Age 15 to 64



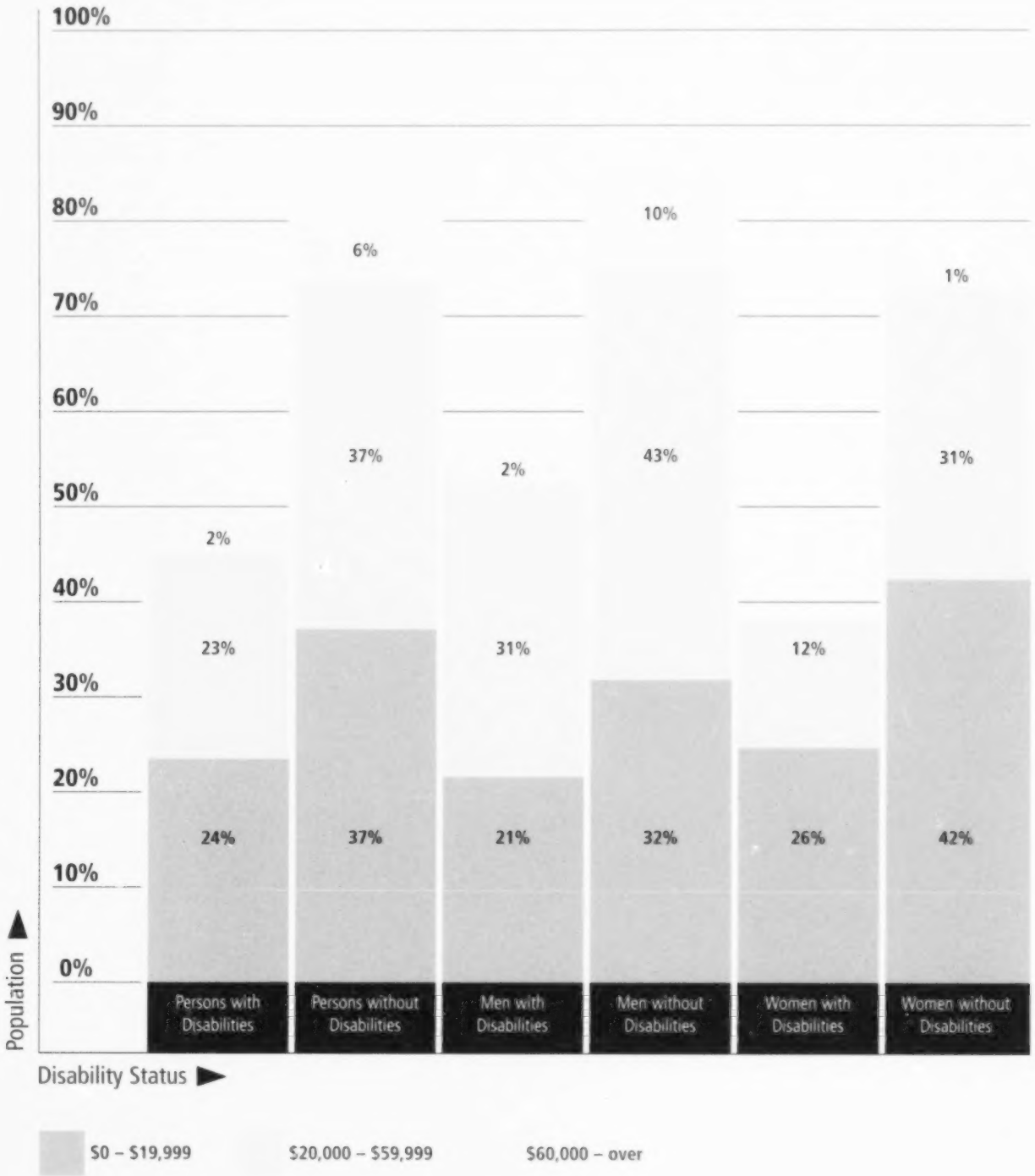
Nova Scotia, Labour Force Activity for Adults Ages 15 to 64 by Gender and Severity of Disability



Nova Scotia, Employment Income for Adults 15 to 64 by Gender and Disability Status



Nova Scotia, Employment Income for Adults 15 to 64 by Gender and Disability Status



Note: percentages do not add up to 100 because those with no employment income are excluded.
Source: Statistics Canada, Participation and Activity Limitation Survey, 2001

Looking Ahead

The development of the new *Multilateral Framework for Persons with Disabilities* provides an exciting opportunity to strengthen Nova Scotia's labour market programs and services.

Over the course of this new agreement, Nova Scotia will be engaging the disability community and reviewing current programs to ensure optimal effectiveness and efficiency. Nova Scotia is committed to continual improvement and, as such, will also conduct ongoing evaluations of our programs. Reporting on this progress will be completed on an annual basis.

Looking ahead to the future affords us the opportunity to reflect on and determine the best course of action. The government of Nova Scotia welcomes the opportunity to work with our partners in addressing this shared challenge.

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